

In the Claims

Applicants have submitted a new complete claim set indicating marked-up claims with insertions and deletions indicated by underlining and strikeouts, respectively.

Please amend pending claims 7, 9, and 26 as noted below.

1. (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid molecule selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a nucleic acid molecule that comprises SEQ ID NO:1,
- (b) a nucleic acid molecule that comprises SEQ ID NO:13
- (c) nucleic acid molecules that differ from the nucleic acid molecules of (a) in codon sequence due to the degeneracy of the genetic code, and
- (d) complements of (a), (b), or (c).

2. (Original) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the isolated nucleic acid molecule comprises SEQ ID NO:1.

3. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the isolated nucleic acid molecule is the nucleic acid molecule of SEQ ID NO:13.

4-6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule that encodes a polypeptide that stimulates growth of lens epithelial cells, and has at least 75% amino acid identity to the full length amino acid sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO.: 2.

8. (Previously Presented) An expression vector comprising the isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 operably linked to a promoter.

9. (Presently Amended) An expression vector comprising the isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 7 4 operably linked to a promoter.

10. (Original) A host cell transformed or transfected with the expression vector of claim 8.

11. (Original) A host cell transformed or transfected with the expression vector of claim 9.

12-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) A kit comprising a package, wherein the package contains:

(i) a nucleic acid agent selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a nucleic acid molecule which hybridizes under stringent conditions to a molecule consisting of the nucleic acid of SEQ ID NO:1 and which codes for a polypeptide that stimulates the growth of lens epithelial cells, wherein the stringent conditions comprise hybridization at 65°C in hybridization buffer wherein the hybridization buffer comprises 3.5 x SSC, 0.02% Ficoll, 0.02% polyvinyl pyrrolidone, 0.02% Bovine Serum Albumin, 2.5mM NaH₂PO₄(pH7), 0.5% SDS, and 2mM EDTA,

(b) nucleic acid molecules that differ from the nucleic acid molecules of (a) in codon sequence due to the degeneracy of the genetic code, and

(c) complements of (a) or (b),

and

(ii) a control comprising an amount of an isolated nucleic acid of claim 1 for comparing to a measured value of hybridization of said nucleic acid agent to said isolated nucleic acid under the stringent conditions in (i).